

MUSICAL PRAYER

GARY STROUTSOS

World Flutist:

Contemporary & Traditional Dakota Cedar wood flutes

Hopi replicated Cedar flute

“Remembering the Songs”

Notes by Gary Stroutsos

From time beyond memory, through the generations that go back beyond counting, beautiful vocal melodies have been transposed to cedar flutes so beautiful melodies can come alive.

The flute is the sound of the wind or the enlightening breath for the Northern Plains Nations. The Hopi flute brings the clouds, so the rain comes for the corn to grow. The plaintive sound these flutes produce mirrors the natural rhythms of the universe; you can hear the land inside these melodies, many lost in time. I carry and remember these songs so the people can better remember.

“What is life? It is a flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.”

Crowfoot (1830–1890), Blackfoot Tribe, 1890

Zuni Sunrise

Morning prayer song
from Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico



**Colyn Peterson – Contemporary six-hole
minor pentatonic Native American style cedar flute**

This is a very popular song at the Pueblo: it is sung by the men who arise first and go out to the east of the village to welcome the day.

(Click images to view larger photos – right click for menu to open in new tab or new window).

Along the River

Turtle medicine song
from Mandan origin

**Bryan Akipa – Traditional five-hole Dakota eagle head cedar
flute**

This turtle medicine song from Mandan origin is sung while feeding the turtles on the banks of the Upper Missouri River in North Dakota. For Buffalo Bird Woman, a Mandan elder who lived in her Indian world and ours during her lifetime (ca.1839–1932).





Bryan Akipa – Traditional five-hole Dakota elk head cedar flute

Dakota honor song to honor the woman that did good things for her community and also played to settle a difference between two people. For Bryan Akipa, traditional Dakota artist who made the flute for this piece.

Tuzigoot

Michael Allen – Hopi replicated Prayer Rock district style six-hole cedar flute

Original song for my Hopi friend Blythe Koyiyumptewa who told me how much she loves Tuzigoot monument, a Hopi ancestral home of her people in the Verde Valley in Arizona.

I play a replica of one of the instruments found in 1931 in the Broken Flute Cave, in the Prayer Rock District of North-eastern Arizona, within Hopi aboriginal territory. Research completed in the 1960s dated the flutes to 620–670 AD, much older than the wooden Plains flutes from the 1800s. A collaboration with renowned Hopi musician Clark Tenakhongva, ethnomusicologist Matthew Nelson, and myself led to a spiritual and cultural exploration of the flute, culminating in a live recording at Ongtupqa (the Hopi name for the Grand Canyon), in the sacred Desert View Watchtower. Tenakhongva sang original compositions in his native language, I improvised on the flute, and Nelson played clay pot drums. The result was a total of nine finished tracks that approximate the way Hopi music may have sounded more than 1,300 years ago. To learn more about how this project came about, you can [read an article by Craig Baker at this link](#), and you can purchase the CD/DVD at ongtupqa.com.



Desert View Watchtower

Drift-Like Clouds

Closing prayer improvisation, the flute to be chosen in the moment.

Special thank you to all that tuned in to listen. “Songs get lonesome if not played.” — Johnny Arlee, Montana Salish elder



GARY STROUTSOS's live performances have captivated audiences around the world. His meditative flute music and time-honored stories evoke the lands and cultures that he has studied over the course of his 36-year career. Gary's mission is to carry the music forward to future generations and to promote stewardship of diverse cultures and the natural environment.

Each of Gary's engaging and unique solo performances is distinct, drawn from the inspiration of the space and the audience. His evocative musical style and use of humor transcends human differences in age and culture, connecting audiences in a shared contemplative space that transport them to a spirit of place.

A Message from Gary Stroutsos:

My name is Gary Stroutsos from Barre, Vermont and I now reside in Seattle, Washington. Since 1997, I have been honored to work with Native American culture bearers and artists.

I am excited to share some of my life's work in this concert, which has been graciously shared with me and the ongoing support from my Native American collaborators. Half of my performance fee from this special concert is going to the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. My current Hopi Long Flute project with Program Director Stewart Koyiyumptewa at Hopi will inspire young Hopi future flute players.

Please email me directly if you want to donate to the Hopi Cultural Preservation office. We move the music forward in a good way.

Thank you,

Gary Stroutsos

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